

A&WS AT THE YMCA

This fun activity is one of the first to use rhythm and music. The song is actually a little too fast, but it works. They don't have to keep up with it to have fun and get some good exercise. Having participants sing along leads to audience participation and interaction. Some may even brag to their grandkids about doing this in your class.

Benefits »

- Uses music in a fun activity.
- Strengthens torso, especially the back extensors and abdominal wall.
- Improves torso and shoulder function and flexibility.

Set It Up »

If you have the equipment, cue up and have ready *YMCA* by the Village People. If your sound system can slow it down some that would be great, too.

How to Do It »

- Participants sit tall and look like a *W*: Arms out to their sides at shoulder height and elbows bent about 45 degrees. That's the *W*.
- Participants make an *A*. They sit tall and push both arms up to form an *A*, touching thumbs and fingers above the head.
- Tell them how great that looks, but you'd rather see a *Venus de Milo A*! They should lift high throughout their whole trunk and pull in abdominals. Coach them through it.
- Repeat *A* & *Ws* 6 to 12 times, as tolerated.



Take It Further »

- ⦿ Practice the letters for the *YMCA* song slowly and with good core stability.
 - Have them form a *Y*.
 - Have them form an *M*.
 - Have them form a *C*.
 - Then form a backward *C* (a mirror image, to work the other side).
 - Then an *A* (they know that one already!)
- ⦿ Do the letters a little faster, cueing them frequently to keep the core stabilized.

Give It More Balance »

- ⦿ Once participants appear stable and comfortable with all the letters, introduce the *YMCA* song. Then play it with them and enjoy!

Keep It Safe »

Cue participants to keep abdominal wall braced while lifting ribs and arms. Do the movements and songs slowly for as long as they need.

Live It »

Everyone will have some fun at the YMCA! Thanks for playing!